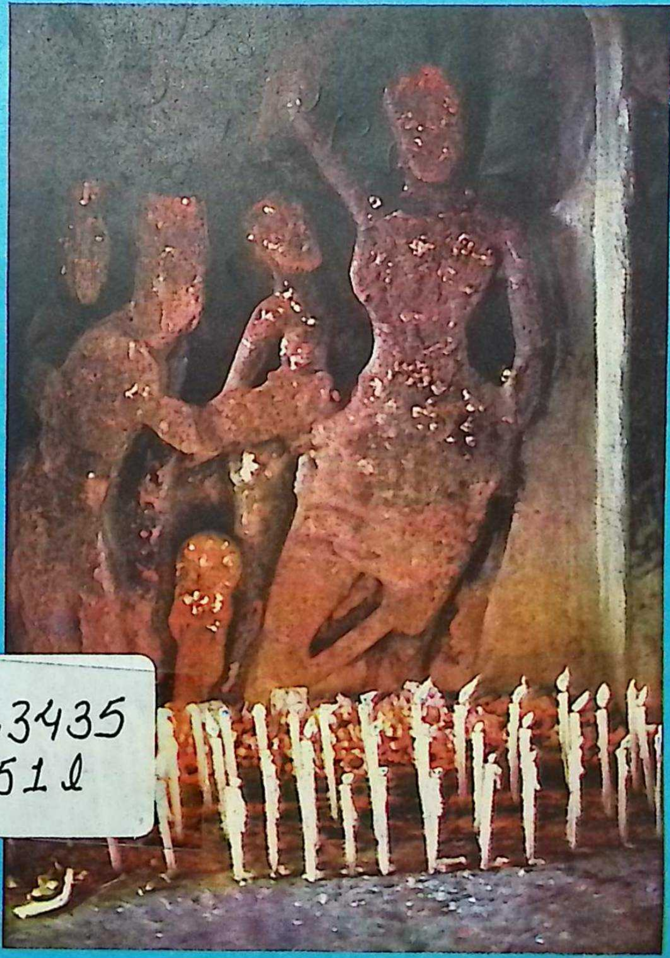
LUMBINI

Nepal

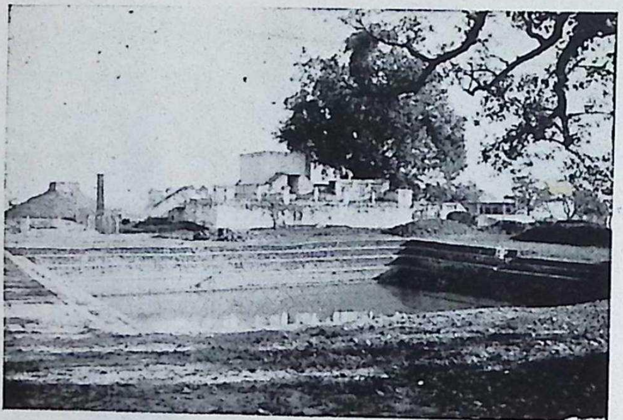


LUMBINI

In the plains south-west of Nepal south of the first foothills of the Himalayas and Churia range, lies Lumbini, birth-place of Gautama, the Buddha. Lumbini garden, where Buddha was born in 623 B.C. lies in Rupendehi district in Lumbini Zone of Nepal. Because of flat landscape and domesticable fauna and the favourable agricultural environment of the region, Lumbini and the whole region of Kapilavastu reveal such antiquities which date back to pre-Christian era. The site, described as a beautiful garden in the Buddha's time is still remote today. The Sal groves have retreated about 12 miles to the north into the foothills of Churia range

Lumbini, the birth-place of Lord Buddha is the sacred place for Buddhists from all over the world. It stands on an equal footing with holy places sacred to other world religions. A veteran Asian traveller and author of several books, writes "As millions of Christians look to Jerusalem for inspiration, as millions of Muslims turn to Mecca, so do the three hundred million Buddhists, see in the sacred kingdom of Nepal, a hallow thicket marked

by a pillar left by the great Ashoka, where the Sakyamuni was born. Buddhists knew that the site was in Nepal."



The Birth-Place of Buddha

Lord Gautama Buddha is not only the light of Asia, but the light of the whole suffering humanity. Lord Buddha sent some of his disciples around the world with the famous sermon:

'Go ye forth O Bhikkhus, for the gain of the many, for the welfare of the many, in compassion for the world. Proclaim the Doctrine glorious, preach ye a life of holiness, perfect and pure'.

According to early Chinese pilgrims Huian Tsang and Fa-Hian who visited Kapilavastu and Lumbini Garden the whole region was graced with numerous stupas, monasteries and palaces in the past. The broken Ashokan Pillar, the ruins of an old monastery, the stone image of Maya Devi, and other archaeological objects today attest to the splendour of the holy seat of Buddhism.

Birth of Lord Buddha

King Suddhodhana, the father of Lord Buddha, of the Sakya dynasty of Kschetriya solar race was the supreme head of a tiny republic in the Nepal Tarai with Kapilavastu as capital. Queen Maya Devi, the wife of Suddhodhana, while travelling in state from Kapilavastu toward her parent's home gave birth to a child in the Lumbini Garden while taking rest under the big Sal tree on the full moon day of May. The child was called Siddhartha, the family name being Gautama. It is thought that he was born in 623 B. C., renounced his home when he was 30 years, attained his enlightenment when he was 35 years and died at the age of 80.

Kapilavastu

It was the capital of Sakya Republic where Lord Buddha lived and enjoyed his life until his thirtieth year. Kapilavastu, the native land of Buddha was an important centre of early Buddhism. Kapilavastu was identified with Tilaurakot by the archaeologists. It is located three miles to the north-west of Taulihawa.

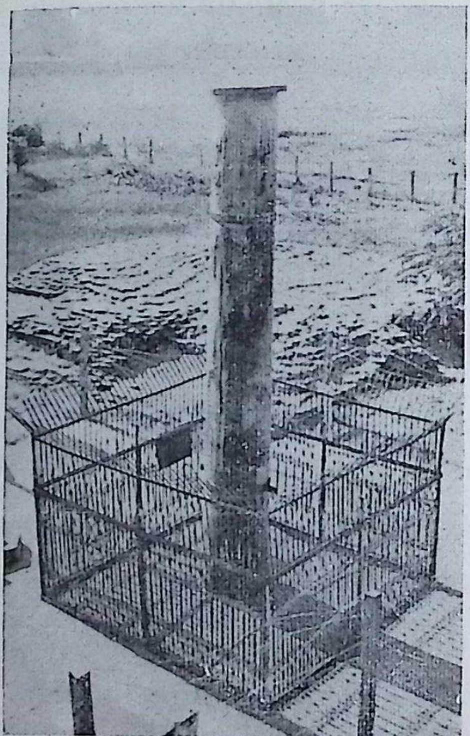
Kapilavastu is associated with the following incidents in the life of Lord Buddha; Where Siddhartha met the sick person; where the Saint Aye (Asita) meditated; where Siddhartha competed with other Shakya youth in the athletics; where the prince had shot an arrow, which hit the ground causing a clear spring of water to shoot up; where Siddhartha threw an elephant killed by his cousin Nanda; where Buddha converted 500 Shakyas and eight princesses to Buddhism; where after the enlightenment the Buddha met and preached his father and his son Rahul; where Buddha sat under the Banyan tree, etc. etc.

Kapilavastu was naturally a prominent seat of Buddhist culture and was an abode of religious edifices, such as stupas, monasteries, temples etc. As a result of negligence for several hundred years most of the remains of the place had disappeared except mounds and ruins. Today Kapilavastu bears very little resemblance to what it used to be at the time of Buddha.

Kapilavastu is surrounded by many ruins which include Chetradei, Araurakot, Sagarhawa, Dohani, Piparhawa, Gotihawa Pipri, Kardajahawa, Lamtiya, Sisahaniya. Besides ruins and mounds of old stupas and monasteries at Kapilavastu there are some temples built with the kiln-burnt bricks and clay-mortar. The famous temples of Kapilavastu built after the fifteenth century is the temple of Tauleshwar Mahadev which is located at Taulihawa. Other temples are scattered at Ramghat (Tilaurakot.) Samai Mayi, Bikuli etc.

Things To See In Lumbini

The Ashokan Pillar- In 1895 Dr. Fuhrer, an archaeologist from Germany while wandering about the foothills of the Churia range had discovered this massive stone



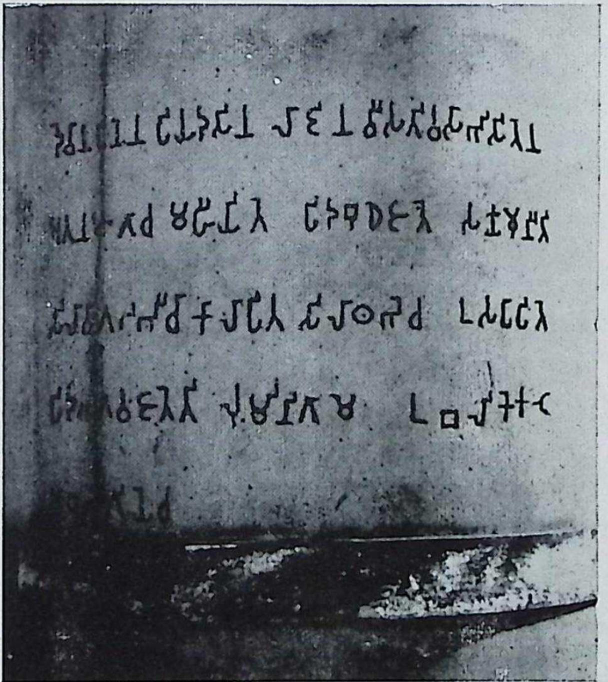
Ashokan Pillar

pillar erected by the Emperor Ashoka who visited there in 250 B.C. to pay homage to the birth-place of Buddha. It is said that Emperor Ashoka had visited the Lumbini Garden in the twentieth year of his coronation.

The ston pillar erected by Emperor Ashoka bears the following inscription in Brahmi.

1. **Devana-Piyena Piyadasina** lagina-Visativasabhisetena
2. atana-agach mahiyite hiddha-**Budhe**-jate **Sakyaminuti**
3. sila-vigadabhi-chakalapita silathabhe-cha usapite
4. hida-**Bhagavam**-jate ti **Lummini Game** ubalike-kate
5. athabhagiye-cha (II)

(Roman-Script)



Inscriptions Lumbini Pillar

Translation

The following is the translation of the above inscription.

King Piyadasi beloved of the gods, having been anointed 20 years, came himself and worshipped saying: "**Here Buddha Sakyamuni was born**". And he caused to be made a stone (capital) representing a horse; and he caused (this) stone pillar to be erected. Because here the worshipful One was born the village of Lumbini has been made free of taxes and a recipient of wealth.

He both caused to be made a stone bearing a horse and caused a stone pillar to be set up in order to show that the Blessed one was born here.

Temple of Maya Devi– In addition to the Ashokan Pillar, the next visible monument of Lumbini is the temple of Maya Devi. It contains a stone relief depicting the birth scene of Lord Buddha. The Maya Devi shrine, containing the sculpture with nativity scene of Lord Buddha, has been worshipped by the devotees since the beginning of the Christian era.

The bas-relief shows Maya Devi supporting herself by holding on with her right hand to a branch of a Sal tree, with the newly born infant Buddha standing upright on a lotus pedestal against on an oval halo, while two celestial figures are engaged in the act of pouring water and lotuses from vessels from the heaven indicated by the delineation of clouds.

The temple of Maya Devi was believed to have been built over the foundation of more than one earlier temple or stupa. According to the belief of the scholars, the Maya Devi temple was built on the ruins of the Ashokan Stupa itself. When Emperor Ashoka visited Lumbini, he had built a stupa also,

South of the Maya Devi temple, there is the famous sacred bath pool Known as "Puskarani" believed to be the same sacred pool in which queen Maya Devi had taken bath just before giving birth to Buddha and it is also the same pool where enfant Buddha was given his first purification bath. This structure which is of secular

nature has got three projecting terraces in descending order and is rivetted with a fine brick masonary.

The Buddhist Temple– The monastery or the new Buddhist temple is built into the surrounding complex of Lumbini in the manner of most modern Buddhist shrines in Nepal. The prayer hall contains a large image of Buddha. Ancient murals decorate the walls.

Besides this modern Buddhist temple built in traditional style there are ruined walls, rectangular restored tank, and earth mounds. Archaeological excavations undertaken so far in Lumbini revealed the brick foundations of a monastery, some small votive stupas and large plinths.

Besides a more recent Mahendra Pillar, Lumbini has a bazar, a high school, a Post Office, old and new Rest Houses, Tube well, Dispensary, Police Post and Malaria Eradication Office.

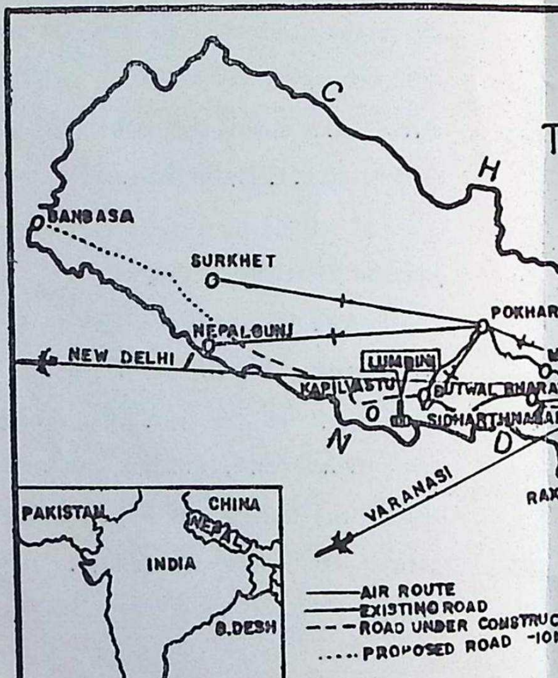
How To Reach Lumbini

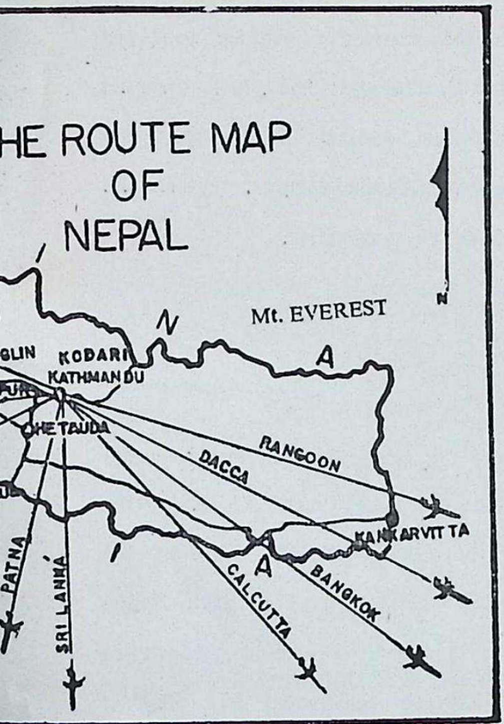
Bhairawa is connected with Kathmandu by air and road. Bhairahawa and Lumbini are connected with an all weather road and regular bus service is available. Lumbini is also served with a motorable road from Nowgarh, a railway station of N. E. Rly of India.

Lumbini Development Project

In April 1967, during a visit to Nepal, Mr. U-Thant, the Secretary General of the United Nations suggested development of the site. He envisaged a pilgrimage and tourist centre, with an accommodation for pilgrims, visitors and tourists. His Majesty's Government of Nepal, anxious to share its heritage, responded enthusiastically.

The Master Plan comprises three main elements each of one square mile : a) **Lumbini village** b) **Monastic enclave**, and c) **Sacred Garden**, the whole area surrounded by the green areas.


C
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SURKHET
NEPALGUNJ
NEW DELHI
LUMBINI
KAPILVASTU
SIDHARTHNAGAR
N
D
VARANASI
PAKISTAN
CHINA
NEPAL
INDIA
B.DESH
SRI LANKA
AIR ROUTE
EXISTING ROAD
PROPOSED ROAD


HE ROUTE MAP
OF
NEPAL
N
Mt. EVEREST
KODARI
KATHMANDU
HETAUDA
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KANKARVITTA
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Lumbini Village

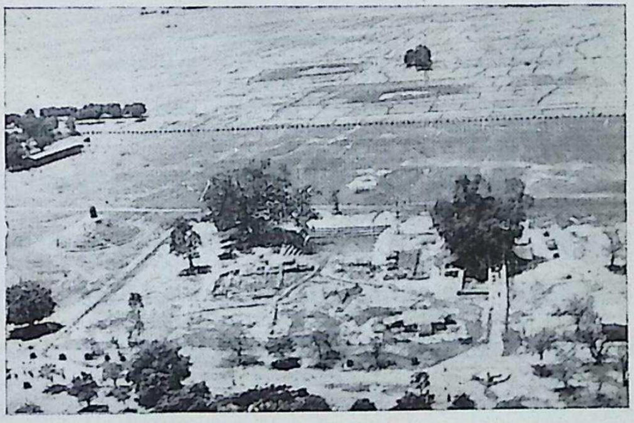
The Lumbini village will provide accommodation for both the pilgrims and the tourists on the one hand and local service population on the other hand. It is essential that the village is not just another tourist centre, but an integral part of the whole Lumbini complex, and therefore, built to higher standards of construction.

Monastic Enclave

It is proposed that this enclave should include a site museum containing the antiquities recovered during the excavation together with other materials depicting the life of the Buddha. It would also have a small library and an information centre and a group of shrines, monasteries and places of worship to be constructed by individual states and institutions. The area might assume a diversity of styles in keeping with the free development and diversity of Buddhistic sects, yet preserve an air of tranquility.

The Sacred Garden

The essence of the design should be to meet an atmosphere of tranquility, universality and clarity, consistent with the idea of the birth of the Buddha. The planting and landscaping would reflect this aim and all structures would have to be built to highest standards of design.



The Existing Garden From The Air

This project will contribute to the promotion of international cultural exchange and international friendship,

goodwill and understanding. Lumbini is to present a living inspiration for all mankind. It is to be conceived as a generating centre of spiritual and cultural force representing the Buddhist teachings. This project will be connected with international co-operation in learning and education. Apart from these the idealisation of the Master Plan dealt with four aspects, i. e socio – economical touristic, historical, and archaeological, cultural and religious for the development of the Lumbini – Gandaki Zone as a whole.

The Lumbini Project, as a whole, unlike what was conceived of at the inception as a purely religious project, is now an integral part of the multipurpose development of the National Plan of Nepal in general and the development of Lumbini in particular. As Lord Buddha belongs to the entire humanity, the accessibility of his birthplace shall, *inter alia*, provide and attract perennial flow of visitors with aesthetic and general interests.

KAPILAVASTU

The land across the Rohini River was the homeland of the Koliyas to which his mother, Queen Maya Devi belonged. The river Rohini still flows quietly and it has the same name it bore in those days. But the name of the Bhagirathi River in Kapilavastu has been changed to Banganga River. It flows today along the western side of Tilaurakot which is about 27 km to the west of Lumbini in the Kingdom of Nepal.

The remains of the fortified city of Kapilavastu were buried in the forest near the bank of the Banganga River.

These remains of Tilaurakot are clearly related not only in terms of their position to Lumbini and Banganga River but also in accordance with numerous Buddhist scriptures as well as travelogues of the Chinese travellers Fa-hsien and Huan Tsang.

The Buddhist Scriptures says, "The snow-covered peaks of the Himalayas look down on the place of Kapilavastu which is located on the bank of river."

The remains are surrounded by a moat and the walls of the city are made of bricks. The remains of the city of Kapilavastu are in fact in a grand scale and it was indeed a seat of very high culture.

Excavations carried out by the Indian Archaeologist P.C. Mukharji at the end of the 19th century were instrumental in determining that the remains of Tilaurakot were actually the ancient site of Kapilavastu. Renewed excavations by the Department of Archaeology, HMG/Nepal and the Rissho University of Japan have further supported the authenticity of the site.

Arourakot: About 6 miles (9.54 km) northwest of Taulihawa there is a rectangular fortified area which is popularly known as Arourakot after the village Aroura, which is situated about one furlong (.2km) south. The fortified area is identified by P.C. Mukharji as the natal town of **Kanakmuni Buddha**. Remains of ancient moat and brick fortification around the Kot can still be clearly located. The fortified area measures about 750x600 ft. (228x182.4M). The central part of the Kot is flat and depressed. A brick lined well is seen to the south and an elevated mound towards the northwest corner. The pottery here is mostly redware but some pieces of N,B.P, Ware can be picked up from time to time.

Chatradei: About 3 miles (4.8 km) north of Taulihawa, there is a village called Chatradei situated on the right bank of the Banganga River. Towards a furlong (0.2 km) west of the village the habitatoinal ruins extend in the form of a large triangular mound. Most of the pottery and antiquities found here belong to Sunga-Kushana period, while remains of the structures may relate to early medieval times.

Gotihawa : About 3 miles (4.77 km) southwest of Taulihawa, there is a village called Gotihawa. Almost in the centre of the village there is an Ashokan pillar standing in situ. The upper portion of the pillar is broken and lost, and only the lower portion of the pillar 10 ft. high (3.04m) is intact and situ. The circumference of the pillar is 8'6" (2. 6m) at the extent portion. Mauryan polish is visible in its exposed upper part. Adjoining the pillar towards its northeast, there is a huge stupa with successive ring of wedge shaped Mauryan bricks. The stupa is now overbuilt by three tiled and three thatched houses. About 200 yards (182 m) north of the pillar, there is a structural ruin which is used as a barn by the villagers.

Besides the above mentioned sites, other place of archaeological site interest like Dhamnihawa stupa, Itahkot, Murchawa, Derua and Sandwa were also explored.

Kudan: About a mile (1. 60km) southwest of Taulihawa, on the left side of the Shoratgarh–Taulihawa road stands the village Kudan having a huge structural ruin with a cluster of four mounds and a tank. The mounds were excavated in 1962 by Debala Mitra who exposed large brick temple of circa 8th century.

Niglihawa: About 3 miles (7.95 km) northwest of Taulihawa, there is quadrangular tank surrounded by bushes, which is known as Niglisagar. On the western bank of the tank there are two broken pieces of the Ashokan pillar, the longer one laying flat and the shorter one stuck into the ground obliquely, about five feet (1.52 m) away to the west. The longer one measures 15 ft. (4.56 m) in length and 7'5" (2.25 m) in circumference at the broadest, and bears towards the top design of 2 peacocks and a Devanagari inscription, reading **om Mani Padme Hun Ripu Mallasya Chiran Jayut 1234.**

The shorter portion of the pillar which is partly buried in the ground measures 5 ft. (1.52 m) in length and 7'5" (2.25 m) in circumference and bears four lines of Ashokan inscription in the Brahmi script which reads as:

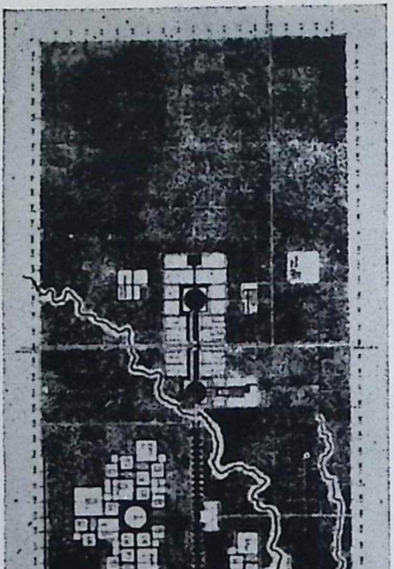
1. DEVANAM-PIYENA PIYADASINA lajina-chodasavasa (bhisi) tena
2. BUDHASA KONAKAMANASA thube-dutiyam vadhite
3. (Visativa) sabhisitena-cha atanam-agacha-mahiyite
4. (Silathabe-chausa) papite (II)

Translation

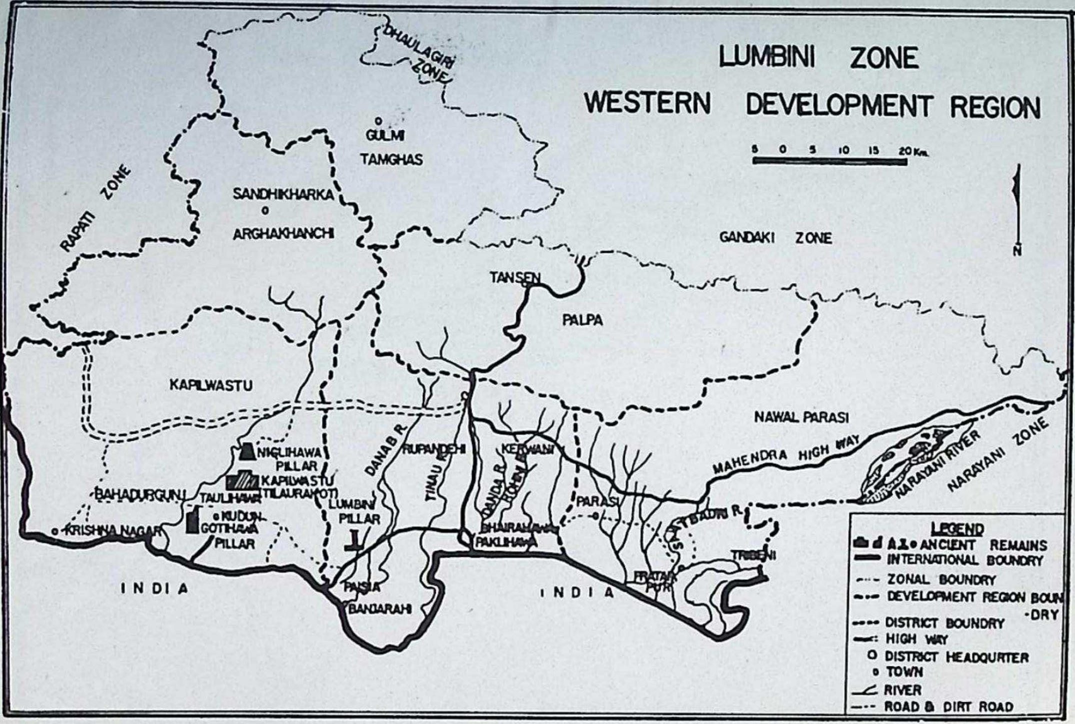
King Piyadasi beloved of the gods, after 14 years of his coronation enlarged for the second time the stupa of Buddha Kanaka Muni, and after 20 years of his coronation he came himself and worshipped (and) he caused (this) stone pillar to be erected.

The capital has disappeared and with it the lion surmounting the pillar also of which Hiuen Tsang has made reference.

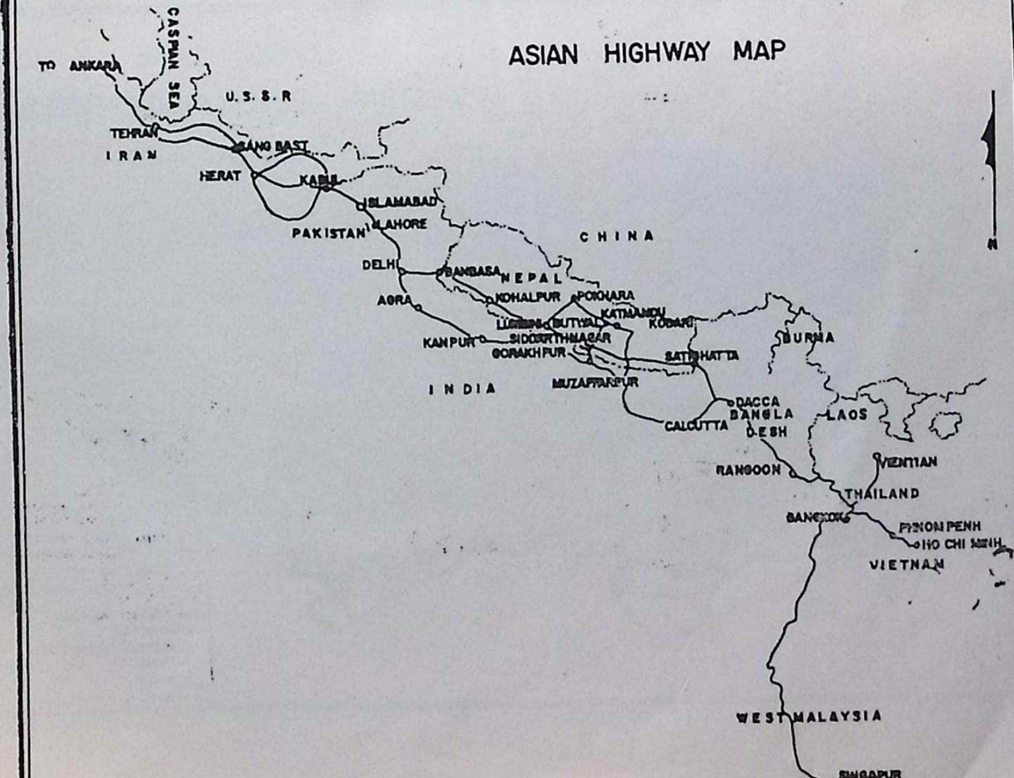
Sagarhawa: About 7 miles (11.13 km) north of Taulihawa, there is a forest area called Sagarhawa. In the midst of the forest there is a huge rectangular tank which is popularly known to villagers as Lumbusagar, i. e. long tank. The ancient tanks ruins which were excavated and identified by Dr. Alois A. Fuhrer as the 'Palace of massacre of the Shakyas' in 1895 can still be located on the west and south banks of the Sagar.



The Master Plan


LUMBINI ZONE
WESTERN DEVELOPMENT REGION
5 0 5 10 15 20 Km.
N
DHAULAGIRI ZONE
GULMI
TAMGHAS
RAPATI ZONE
SANDHIKHARKA
ARGHAKHANCHI
GANDAKI ZONE
TANSEN
PALPA
KAPILWASTU
NAWAL PARASI
NIGLIHAWA PILLAR
KAPILWASTU (TILAURAKOT)
TAULIHAWA
BAHADURGUNJ
KUDUN
GOTIHAWA PILLAR
KRISHNA NAGAR
DANAB R.
RUPANDEHI
TINAU R.
LUMBINI PILLAR
KERWANI
DANDA R.
ROHINI R.
BHAIRAHAWA
PAKLIHAWA
PARASI
MAHENDRA HIGH WAY
NARAYANI RIVER
NARAYANI ZONE
TRIBENI
PRATAPPUR
PAISIA
BANJARAHI
INDIA
INDIA
LEGEND
ANCIENT REMAINS
INTERNATIONAL BOUNDRY
ZONAL BOUNDRY
DEVELOPMENT REGION BOUNDRY
DISTRICT BOUNDRY
HIGH WAY
DISTRICT HEADQURTER
TOWN
RIVER
ROAD & DIRT ROAD

ASIAN HIGHWAY MAP



CONFERENCIA MUNDIAL DEL TOURISMO
WORLD TOURISM CONFERENCE
ВСЕМИРНАЯ КОНФЕРЕНЦИЯ ПОТУРИЗМУ
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SEPTIEMBRE
1980

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